

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /104 W

----- 025976

R 172313Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2345

UNCLAS OTTAWA 3045

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, CA, US

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS NORAD PARTICIPATED IN U.S. OCTOBER 25
ALERT

1. CBC'S WASHINGTON COMMENTATOR DON MCNEIL APPEARED ON LATE EVENING TELEVISION NEWSCAST DEC 16 WITH "REPORT" FROM COLORADO SPRINGS, WHERE HE HAD BEEN ON LOCATION, THAT NORAD (INCLUDING CANADIAN AS WELL AS US FORCES) HAD GONE ON DEFCON III ALERT AT TIME OF ME HOSTILITIES. INTERVIEW WITH CANADIAN BRIGADIER GENERAL AT NORAD HEADQUARTERS WAS SCREENED IN WHICH BG CONFIRMED "STORY," DENYING THAT CANADIAN PERSONNEL HAD REMAINED SEATED WHEN US TROOPS STOOD UP, I.E. CANADIAN PERSONNEL HAD PARTICIPATED IN ALERT. NO MENTION OF CONAD MADE THROUGHOUT COMMENTARY. MCNEIL ATTEMPTED SHOW EXTAFK MIN SHARP HAD SERIOUSLY MISLED CANADIAN PUBLIC IN SAYING EARLIER THAT CANADIAN FORCES HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN ALERT NOR BEEN ASKED TO PARTICIPATE.

2. IN COMMONS DEC 17 PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE (PC) DEFENSE SPOKESMAN HEES ASKED "WHETHER MEMBERS OF CANADIAN ARMED FORCES WHO ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE INTEGRATED NORAD COMMAND AUTOMATICALLY WENT ON THE ALERT TECHNICALLY KNOWN AS "DEFCON III" WHEN PRESIDENT NIXON PUT DEFCON III INTO ACTION ON OCTOBER 25." DEFMIN RICHARDSON REPLIED "IT WAS THE AMERICAN COMPONENT OF NORAD THAT WAS CALLED TO ALERT
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AND NOT ANY PART OF THE CANADIAN PART OF NORAD...THE ALERT

STATUS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES CANNOT BE CHANGED WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT. WE WERE AT NO TIME REQUESTED TO CHANGE THAT STATUS. WE WERE ADVISED THAT THE UNITED STATES INTENDED TO ELEVATE THEIR STATUS TO AN ALERT POSITION. WE WERE ADVISED THAT THEY WERE DOING THIS, BUT WE WERE NOT ASKED TO CHANGE OUR STATUS IN ANY WAY." RICHARDSON LATER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT "SOME INDIVIDUALS IN STAFF POSITIONS" WERE INVOLVED IN NORMAL COURSE OF THEIR DUTIES, BUT "THEY WERE NOT FORMALLY ON ALERT AND THE COUNTRY WAS NOT ON ALERT." NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP) DEFENSE CRITIC ROWLAND ASKED WHEN CANADA WAS INFORMED OF ALERT. RICHARDSON REPLIED, "IT WAS 18 MINUTES PAST TWO O'CLOCK ON OCTOBER 25 THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISED THE CANADIAN PART OF THE NORAD OPERATION, THE CANADIAN CHIEF OF STAFF, THAT HE WAS GOING TO MOVE TO ALERT THE STATUS OF THE UNITED STATES FORCES TO DEFCON POSITION III. HE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY EXEMPT US WHEN HE ADVISED US OF THIS ACTION ON THE PART OF THE AMERICAN AIR DEFENCE." ROWLAND THEN ASKED PRIMIN TRUDEAU "SINCE CANADA WAS NOT CONSULTED" TO REFUSE TO RENEW NORAD AGREEMENT UNDER PRESENT TERMS WHEN AGREEMENT TERMINATED. TRUDEAU REPLIED, "I HAVE LOOKED INTO THIS QUESTION OF CONSULTATION ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND I AM SATISFIED THAT WITH SOME IMPROVEMENTS THIS SYSTEM CAN WORK WELL. CONSULTATION ONLY PROVIDES THAT COUNTRIES UNDER NORAD HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE INTENTIONS OF OTHER MEMBERS. THIS SITUATION DOES NOT APPLY IN RESPECT OF NORAD WHEN THE UNITED STATES DECIDES TO CHANGE THE STATUS OF ITS OWN TROOPS, PARTICULARLY WHEN WE ARE NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAY WITH SUCH AN ALERT. CERTAINLY WE WOULD NOT EXPECT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO CONSULT US WHEN IT INTENDS TO DO SOMETHING OR MAKE SOME CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF ITS OWN TROOPS."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, SECURITY, MILITARY EXERCISES, FOREIGN SERVICE LOCAL EMPLOYEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973OTTAWA03045
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731221/aaaaapbd.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Sep-2001 by thomasv0>; APPROVED <02-Jan-2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REPORTS NORAD PARTICIPATED IN U.S. OCTOBER 25 ALERT
TAGS: MARR, CA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005